

MISSIONARY RESEARCH LIBRARY
Charles L. Boynton Collection
3041 Broadway, New York City

MISSIONARIES SPEAK

FROM
INTERNMENT CAMPS
IN CHINA



GENERAL MISSION BOARD
Church of the Brethren

Elgin, Illinois



Minor M. Myers



V. Grace Clapper



Hazel Rothrock

Internment

BY HAZEL ROTHROCK

It was May Day in Peking last spring. Miss Clapper and I were living in "Old 21," the large house that had been home to many Methodist single women through nearly forty years. The 400 Americans and Britishers of the city had been for five weeks in Weihsien civilian assembly center by order of the Japanese military. We had received no direct message, but rumor was rife, and limited and uncertain ideas of the circumstances of our fellow missionaries and friends were indeed unsatisfying. Dr. Ernest Clay and family, who lived just across the yard, were unable to go because of the measles which one of the two boys contracted just in the midst of the last busy days before the others left on March 25. To us two it was the finger of God in the strange events of those weeks, for their pleasant company and generous aid after so many had gone was a real Godsend. I was busy in the big laundry room when Dr. Clay in his impetuous manner came in bearing news of special significance to all of us. We, the remaining enemy nationals in Peking, were to be sent within a week to join our friends in the concentration camp at Weihsien, Shantung. He had been informed of this at the office of the Swiss consular representative that morning.

Well, what we expected sooner or later had come, and our next task was to get ready to go to we did not know what. But we did know that God would be with us there as here, and that we could not be shut away from his love and care. So we thought as we worked during the following twelve days (for fortunately the time was extended). Bed, bedding, two steamer trunks and hand baggage were the allowance for each person, with cameras, flashlights, large knives or other sharp instruments banned. There were busy days and nights of preparation.

On May 12 after heartfelt farewells to Chinese and Scandinavian friends a group of twenty-two Americans and Britishers gathered by 10 a.m. at the former American embassy for baggage inspection and departure from Peking. Since it was raining and a number of our party were elderly folk or those not strong physically, we were most grateful when rickshaws were furnished for the few blocks to the railroad station. Japanese consular police were our escorts en route and during the train journey. This was probably the first time any of us had had free transportation in China and under imperial escort, so the experience had its compensations! It was a genuine relief to have reserved seats in the coach, and not to have to rush and push according to usual Chinese train etiquette. We were far more fortunate than our friends who had left earlier. They had walked to the station with hand baggage and had been obliged to change trains twice, at Tientsin and at Chinan. We traveled until about 5 o'clock the next morning, when we got off at the Weihsien station. Here we sat in a dingy cold room waiting for daylight and rickshaws.

Still accompanied by our guards we then rode through the little suburb, past the great imposing city walls, and on out into the open countryside. At several places because of recent rain the mud was so deep or an incline so slippery that some of us got out and walked a little way. The grain fields were beautifully green and here and there along the road were tall slab monuments inscribed with Chinese characters telling, I suppose, of the greatness of some one long gone. Finally we saw trees clustered in the distance with a circular roof showing above part of the green and a watchtower built high on the corner of the wall. We had been guessing at various possible sites as being our destination, but this last appeared more and more to be that most like a mission compound. We knew that the large Presbyterian compound near the city of Weihsien was to be our new home for an indefinite time.

To our surprise and joy we began to make out the forms of persons looking over the walls and waving to

us as we drew nearer. About two miles from the city came journey's end at the large front gate, with scores of our fellow Westerners lined along the near-by walls to see and welcome us. It was with mixed emotions we greeted them, got out of our rickshaws and entered this gate. Would it prove to be, according to its native name, the "happy way courtyard" inside these walls, or would there be want and privation as some of our Chinese friends feared and predicted for us?

It was with special gladness that Miss Clapper and I met Bro. Minor Myers, for when we had said farewell six weeks before there was no certainty as to when we might meet again.

After the formalities of reporting our money and signing statements of good behavior for the Japanese authorities, we were told of our room assignments and then taken to the Peking kitchen. Here we most gratefully ate a warm breakfast of tea, bread and scrambled eggs. (The latter we found later were special for us newcomers and not served to the others that day.) Miss Clapper was shown to the hospital which had been cleaned up and organized to a certain degree in the past six weeks. A glassed-in veranda affording a beautiful view and much good air was her home for the summer. My roommates were two former Peking women. Three single beds, a washstand, three trunks, and a wardrobe cupboard did not leave much spare floor space in a room slightly larger than 9 by 12 feet. Housekeeping was not complex!

The entire compound covered a little more than twenty-one acres, but the nine foreign houses on seven of these acres were reserved by the Japanese authorities for their own use. There were buildings formerly accommodating a large middle school, a primary school, a women's Bible school, the hospital, and many, many dormitories for these institutions. Five two-story buildings provided large rooms (formerly classrooms) where groups of twenty and more could be housed in one room. In the scores of small rooms in row upon row of one-story dormitories usually three persons to a room was the assignment. Families with more than one child usually had two rooms. We were allowed

to mix freely and were segregated in no way, the living arrangements being entirely in the hands of a foreign committee. Many pretty dooryard gardens were seen by midsummer and the camp's appearance and organization constantly improved as people had more time and learned from experience.

In March when the first internées arrived the grounds were in a sorry state, having been occupied by troops at some time during the previous months. The Japanese authorities had spent considerable time and money in preparation, but the place was not ready for occupancy. It was reported they had asked the Tokyo officials for two weeks longer but the request was not granted. Several wells, water towers, and showers were there from former times. The Japanese built a bakery, freshly whitewashed all rooms and put up a small wall cupboard in each one. Much school furniture and even laboratory equipment lay outdoors when the foreigners arrived. Salvaging from this supply and gathering fuel for small individual brick stoves (where supplementary cooking could be done) was a chief occupation in the early weeks of camp. By the time of our arrival on the 13th of May a great change had been made, we were told, and by the time of our departure on Sept. 15 we ourselves had seen much improvement. The engineering department with its carpenters, masons, and plumbers was a most important factor in bringing about these visible changes. It may be of interest, too, to mention that shoe and watch repair service was established by midsummer. A barber shop, sewing and mending rooms, daily hospital clinic, eye and dentistry service had been set up quite early. In short, the practical needs of a community of nearly 2,000 people became evident and were met resourcefully with the limited means at hand and the ingenuity of those in camp.

Weih sien is located on the Shantung peninsula only thirty miles from the sea to the north and fifty miles to the south. It is halfway between Chinan, site of Cheloo University, and the port city of Tsingtao, about 100 miles each way. The summer climate was pleasant with cool nights until August, when the heat

became quite oppressive. Rains began the first of July and continued at intervals until autumn, bringing refreshment and verdure to the Shantung plains. On July 4 a torrential rain took out about forty feet of the compound wall, a really exciting event to a community living entirely inside these walls. But repairs were soon made and life went on as before.

Although nominally there was a Japanese officer at the head of each of nine committees, practically our camp life was organized and carried on by the internees themselves. For this we were most thankful American organizing ability had a golden opportunity and worked to the benefit of the camp in many ways. But English, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, Belgian, Dutch and other nationals also made contributions of importance and worth. In all there were nearly 1,800 of us, so co-operation and mutual helpfulness were very necessary for the smooth running of this new kind of community life. Catholic and Protestant missionaries comprised half the total, and of this half about 400 were Protestants. It was a new experience for both groups to be thus thrown together, but doubtless there developed a better mutual understanding and more Christian love because of these contacts in such primitive and crowded circumstances. The quaint dress of the Dutch sisters and the brown robes of the Franciscan fathers added a picturesque note to camp life and represented only two of the thirty different Catholic orders. In August about 470 of their 519 total number amid music and tears left for Peking, to which they were transferred because of the pope's intercession. The non-missionary group were mostly business and professional people, with some who were merely drifters.

Naming the nine camp committees will give a clearer idea of the organization. They were: general affairs, living quarters, employment, food supplies, finance, discipline, education, medical, and engineering. Each able-bodied person was expected to contribute about three hours' community labor each day. Some did considerably more than this, including bakers, carpenters, doctors, nurses and cooks. Many were on a

weekly rotating schedule, particularly for tasks connected with the kitchens, and on Saturday afternoon when the next week's schedule was posted a common remark was, "What is your job next week?"

Because of the difference in system and requirements both British and American schools were carried on. Some texts, which had been duly censored, were brought along, but much credit is due both teachers and pupils for working with such limited equipment. Classes for the British children met inside the large church auditorium, while the American children could be seen grouped here and there just outside in the yard. In June commencement was held for three American high school students. Adult education classes were quite popular and many availed themselves of the opportunity to study a foreign language, review history, or practice drawing. Weekly lectures and entertainments were held. There were an orchestra, a choral society, and a church choir. Three oratorios, *The Crucifixion*, *Elijah*, and *St. Paul*, were sung, the first having been prepared mainly by the Peking choral group before internment orders came. After much pleading and red tape two grand pianos were allowed to be brought to camp. Several concerts of classical music were given. Athletic sports were carried on, baseball being especially popular.

Communications were very limited but we were always grateful for every piece of mail. To my great astonishment and joy just three days after arriving in camp I received a letter from my mother written in February. It had come via West China, been forwarded to Peking and from there to camp, the first letter for many long months. We were at first allowed to write postals and letters of usual length but later were limited to a monthly 25-word postal and a 150-word letter, always in block printing. We often wondered how long they were kept in camp for censorship by the Japanese authorities. Peking English newspapers came late and irregularly. The monthly visit of the Swiss consular representative was always an occasion for news from the outside world.

A word about the religious life at Camp Weihsien. There was here as elsewhere the subtle temptation to be

too busy or occupied to "take time to be holy and speak oft with thy Lord." Morning watch was observed by some in a room with nearly twenty roommates, and by others out of doors under a tree. When on early morning kitchen cleanup I always enjoyed hearing the sweet strains of a hymn from a near-by Salvation Army family group. Short vespers were held in the church several evenings each week and prayer meeting on Tuesday nights. The Salvation Army had charge of a regular Thursday night evangelistic meeting, and small group prayer meetings met here and there. Two Bible classes met on weekdays. On Sunday afternoon there was a union Protestant worship service and on Sunday morning a live Sunday school. Hymn singing, sometimes outdoors, was the regular Sunday evening program. The Catholics had their daily masses and Sunday services, of course, as did the Anglicans their own also.

In case you are interested in firsthand information about an internment camp, let us go back to last July for a visit to kitchen no. 3, otherwise known as Peking kitchen. Because this group was smaller and more homogeneous as to nationality, and had a larger proportion of Christian people, it was easier to prepare palatable meals, to work together, and to maintain a family spirit. In the Tientsin dining room for 600 and the Tsingtao for 800, labor and other problems were more difficult. Our building, formerly used by the women's Bible school, was eighty feet by forty feet, the kitchen proper being twelve feet wide and extending across one end of the building. Two huge Chinese kettles eight feet in diameter were built into the stove, which was made of bricks and fired from the front side. Besides these a steel top cooking space for regular kettles was also used, and just outside the door was a new two-hole stove made especially for egg and hamburger frying. If we arrived early enough we could see a half dozen women diligently scrubbing table and bench tops in the dining room. Several others are busy cutting loaf after loaf of good bread baked in the camp bakery. Outside are two women doing kitchen laundry, chiefly aprons for cooks and butchers and many cloths for covering bread trays and food buckets.

Near by is a porcelain bathtub set up on wooden blocks, its original use long since forgotten, for here vegetables are washed and scrubbed, apples given a cleansing bath before being cored (never peeled), or bread soaked overnight for the ingenious "Weihsien porridge."

When seven-thirty came we heard the roll call bell. This was the signal for all in camp to stand outside their doors to be checked by Japanese guards. (This duty became more and more perfunctory on their part, but a general roll call on the ball field where everyone stood or sat for an hour or so in the sun was held about once each month.) Soon people began forming a queue at the dining room door. Each carried a cloth bag containing eating utensils. As we filed inside we were served near the door and then found places at the tables. Many heads bowed in silent grace, but many ate without asking or knowing God's blessing. Some mornings there might be kaffir corn cereal for a change from bread porridge, or if it was Sunday there might be fried bread and syrup, each one's portion carefully counted or measured. Sometimes there were seconds, depending on the week's food supplies and the cook's estimates. Tea and hot water were always plentiful and were served at the tables. Usually there were some announcements made during the meal or a birthday song was sung to some one who must stand up and bow. When finished we went outdoors to one of the two or three dish washing lines where dishes were washed in wooden tubs as we filed past.

Picnic suppers and teas for small or larger groups were frequently held here and there in shady spots, the kitchen portions being carried out and supplementary food from personal stores often being added. Families more and more carried home their food and ate together, thus helping to maintain family life and take care of manners which too easily slip in a camp environment. Our limited food supplies of the earlier months were much improved with the coming of summer fruits and vegetables. Fish, beef, pork occasionally, eggs, sugar and oil were furnished, often in limited quantities. Bread was always sufficient and for this we were most thankful, even though margarine

and spreads were but rarely provided. Many people took with them some food supplies, which proved to be a great boon for supplementing dining room fare, particularly in the first months. A camp store was tardily established by the authorities and gradually came to have a fair variety of personal and housekeeping needs, as well as limited amounts of honey, candy, oil, eggs and fruits. Our money, placed in the camp bank, could be withdrawn in monthly allowances, and in midsummer the "comfort money" furnished soon after hostilities had begun through the Red Cross and the Swiss consulate was also resumed. Many other interesting phases of camp life could be related, but perhaps this is enough to give you a fair picture.

It is worth while to think of the end results of our months spent in internment, and I give here a few thoughts that have come to me. We were not mistreated. Annoyances, inconveniences, limitations were our lot, and no doubt to be expected. Uncertainty and isolation were probably the hardest part to bear, but these very facts made prayer more vital and faith more essential. A very real benefit was to be found in our simple living with much of the day spent outdoors, not far from God's best plan for humans perhaps. There were no radios, telephones or traffic with their distracting sounds. Of course, we would have been thrilled with these very objects of modern life if it had been possible to have had them! Housekeeping was simple and entirely lacking in modern conveniences. We lived in crowded rooms, carried all our water, did laundry in wash basins in many cases, used Chinese style latrines, retired at 10 o'clock, or soon after, when lights were turned out (power was provided from the city and all buildings were wired), and ate stew served from large dingy metal pails out of unbreakable soup bowls on tables "untouched by linen cloths." But how much this helped us to sympathize with the common Chinese in their small homes devoid of modern inventions! And how it helped one to realize the truth of the Scriptures, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth."

Another great benefit was the leveling and mixing

process of camp life. Artificial barriers had kept people in their own small worlds in the past, but all these were removed now. Missionary and lawyer carried out the day's garbage for their row of families. Preacher and ex-marine cleaned dirty kettles and mopped floors black with coal dust. Catholic priest and Pentecostal evangelist stoked the kitchen fires and carried out ashes. Banker, tobacco salesman, and Salvation Army man worked together at laying bricks for a chimney. Anglican bishop and Methodist doctor repaired dining room tables and made fly catchers. God alone knows what seeds for the kingdom were sown by example and by word during such casual daily contacts. Also a part of this process was the removing of religious prejudices and denominational barriers. We can earnestly pray for the future day of missions when less division and greater spiritual unity are surely destined to prevail that every missionary who lived at Camp Weihsien may be the better prepared for that time because of having been in the melting pot which existed there.

We knew there was much and constant prayer for us by you in the homeland, by Chinese Christians, and by others around the world. We praise God for his eternal goodness and faithfulness in so wonderfully answering those prayers. May we continue to pray for our fellow citizens still left in Camp Weihsien, as well as those in all other internment and prison camps.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me,
bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his
benefits:

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all
thy diseases;

Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who
crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender
mercies. . . .

Bless the Lord, O my soul."

From Weihsien to Mormugao

BY V. GRACE CLAPPER

September 15, 1943, had arrived at last and it was a red-letter day for two hundred eighty-five American citizens who had been interned at Weihsien, the majority of them since March 25, 1943. On that September day the big gates of the former Presbyterian mission compound, which had been converted into a concentration camp, swung open wide and these internees filed out, properly numbered and tagged like so many pieces of baggage. Liberty was their goal but it was yet a long way ahead, even though in sight. The camp was two miles distant from the Weihsien depot, and the would-be repatriates were transported thither in large buses. All were congregated outside the walls of the camp to await their turn. Remaining American friends, together with British friends and those of other nationalities, sat upon or hung over the walls of the compound (the barbed wire had been removed for this special occasion) or stood on elevated ground inside and gazed with longing eyes upon their departing friends and the "field of liberty" beyond the wall. While waiting for buses, we sat upon our baggage or upon the ground, or visited under massive trees. Never before did the countryside look so good and so beautiful to us, now that we were outside that wall that was topped with barbed wire and surrounded by electrified wire ten feet from the base. The Salvation Army band furnished us with music, the strains of which falling on our ears created mingled feelings of joy and sorrow both inside and outside the wall, for most of the time it was the familiar tune, *It's Only Going Home*.

By early afternoon we were conducted safely to the depot, and soon were all aboard for Shanghai! Individual lunches, the best the camp could afford, had been prepared for us by our friends who remained be-

hind. They had arisen as early as 3:00 a.m. to prepare two hundred eighty-five lunches. These consisted of camp bakery bread and meat sandwiches, no butter of course, hard boiled eggs, not too fresh, apples and pears, which the Japanese had thoughtfully provided for this special occasion. These were not Wenatchee apples or Bartlett pears, however. Some managed to have a few extras such as cookies, peanuts, tinned fruit, etc. Well do I remember that I had a one-pint thermos bottle of real coffee which I had brought along from Peking. I had saved it for celebrating some special occasion. This was the special occasion. Minor Myers had saved a tin of evaporated milk for the same purpose, so we had real cream for real coffee, and was that coffee good! But one pint of coffee for three people with other people hungry for coffee sitting all around us did not go far! But we swallowed it down, salving our consciences by thinking it is all right to be selfish this one time. Other folks had to do the same with their luxuries.

As night came on and the crowded day at last came to a close, we longed for a place to lie down and stretch out, but the train was crowded to its utmost capacity and there was no space for such luxurious relaxation. Our crowded condition averted one danger—that of falling over, or off the seat when dozing. Around ten o'clock some of the passengers got their tired brains to working and improvised first-class berths by stacking luggage between two seats facing each other and thus made a bed for three people. But what about the other three people who occupied those seats during the day? If you had a peep into the inside of the train about 2:00 a.m., you would have found the other half without any difficulty, for there they lay, stretched out in the aisle, on the platforms, up in the crevices of the baggage racks or sitting straight up, back to back, dozing away. A more motley array of human freight you never saw. In a few words it was a "Three Nights' Three Deep Slumber Party" (minus the slumber)! One of our good doctors came around distributing sleeping pills to the weak and overtired passengers, and some who got the pills slept!

Three times while en route to Shanghai we were held up on account of wrecks along the way, tactfully timed and placed by China's invisible army. The train would stop just anywhere without any apparent reason, and stand still on the tracks for hours in a stretch, while we paced restlessly to and fro on the platform, wondering if we would ever get to Shanghai at that rate. But when we finally got started and after a few hours saw the freight cars turned over alongside the railroad, the secret was out. On the morning of September 17, we arrived at Ping Pu and were ferried across the river to Nanking, where we had another long wait. Our baggage was piled up in heaps in the depot, and we sat on it, or lay on it, depending on what we could make out of it. Some found good locations right on the top of a stack of baggage and took a much needed rest. Dry buns were distributed among us, and we chewed on them for pastime. They really tasted good compared to our camp lunches which by this time had outlived their day. Waiting and standing in line had become such a habit with us that we seldom asked any questions about waiting. We automatically fell in line whenever we happened to see a new line forming, and we did not know whether a stick of candy or a cholera inoculation was in store for us. When Hazel and I saw a line forming on a street of Rio de Janeiro we got into it and landed in a bus. So it seems that "queues" are becoming fashionable outside as well as inside internment camps. Well, while we were listlessly waiting at Nanking, the customs officers arrived, and it was time to get in line again. Going through customs is lots of fun if one does not mind unpacking and repacking trunks and suitcases.

We arrived in Shanghai around ten o'clock on September 18, and were taken to the former St. John's University for the rest of that day and the night. Eight large buses conveyed us to the university, and we were told that we arrived by a circuitous route in order that we might be shown off. Whether fact or rumor we did not know, but we do know that the Chinese populace turned out en masse to take a last look at these "troublers of Israel."

The spacious campus of St. John's was covered with soft green grass, and many of the tired, weary guests (?) threw themselves on the grass and stretched out for a much-needed rest. The baggage was strewn over the campus, presenting a picture which cannot be duplicated just any time anywhere, but which is nevertheless common in a world such as we are living in today. That acre or more of baggage represented all that was left of the earthly possessions of two hundred and eighty-five people who had lived in China half their lives, or at least long enough to call China home. We were indeed a tired, hungry multitude, and when lunch was finally announced we lost no time getting to the dining room, where one bowl of delicious hot stew was served with bread and tea. We all wished the second bowl might be served but we were thankful for one. After lunch it was customs again, so there was no rest for the weary until nightfall, when we were served a light supper and assigned to the various dormitories and classrooms supplied with camp cots. Here we were glad to settle down for the night. Everybody was stirring early in the morning of the 19th, making final preparations for boarding the ship which was to be our home from then on until October 15. It was already lying in the harbor at Woosung, ready to take on its new "cargo." After breakfasting we were conducted to a launch boat which in turn conducted us to the Teia Maru. The open deck of the launch was enclosed by yards and yards of red and white bunting (we're sure it was a mere oversight that the blue was omitted). This served a double purpose in that it beautified the launch and kept curious eyes from gazing upon the scuttled Contra Verda lying in the harbor. It will be remembered that the first shipload of repatriates was carried by this Italian ship.

The Teia Maru was formerly a French liner named the Aramio. It is a beautiful boat and surely looked good to us after our wearisome train trip. In normal times it carried about seven hundred passengers, but on this trip it had to make arrangements for carrying fifteen hundred. Accordingly, social halls, lounges smokers, nursery, etc., had to be converted into dormi-

tories. Hazel was tucked away in a large room nicknamed The Sardine Box with two hundred and forty-nine other women passengers. Minor was one of two hundred and fifty men who lived in the hold of the ship, while I was located in the small nursery room with only thirty roommates. There were four dining rooms and three sittings for each meal, making twelve meals per day for the working staff who also served coffee, tea, sandwiches and drinks in midafternoon and at night. The food was quite satisfactory the first few days and throughout according to Japanese standards.

The lunches and dinners were quite tasty even though monotonous, but the breakfasts were not so satisfying. They consisted of highly sweetened coffee without milk, cold boiled eggs (camp lunch brand), and rice gruel with a dash of sugar and some "extras" thrown in. Some called the last named "Lutheran Diet," but unless the reader is a student of church history, he is probably not interested in making denominational distinctions in diet. But seriously, in the light of Gen. 9:3, why should one be fastidious in such matters? Plain jello was the main dessert, the only variation being in the color. Fruit was almost an unknown quantity, and vegetables were almost nil, in spite of the fact that tons of decayed vegetables were reported to have been thrown overboard here and there along the way. The table linens were spotless the first day, but no napkins were furnished. Those who ate at the first sittings had the advantage of clean dishes. Passengers had access to bathrooms and lavatories with cold tap water, but the bathtubs and the showers were kept under lock and key. A working staff of thirty men took care of four dining rooms, cabins, stairways, lobbies, bathrooms and dormitories, so you may draw your own conclusions about sanitary conditions in general, but everybody was so glad and thankful to be on the way home, that one heard little complaining. Every passenger was given a cake of toilet soap. Mothers of small children and the sick were given several cans of condensed milk, and the children were presented with toys.

We stopped not *at*, but *near* Hongkong, Manila, Sai-

gon and Singapore, picking up more passengers at each stop, the last of the fifteen hundred being taken on at Singapore. We noted two incidents on the voyage which were fair examples of the "co-prosperity sphere in the Far East" (minus the prosperity and the emphasis off the "co"). Our boat was anchored down the Mekong River from Saigon, Indo-China. Some natives in sampans containing bananas, pineapples, etc., pulled up alongside of the Teia, hoping to sell to the Teia passengers. Presently they were spied by a Japanese naval launch scurrying in among the sampans. Some uniformed men jumped onto the native boats, treated the natives roughly and dumped the fruit into the river. To attempt to describe the feelings of the Western spectators of this scene would be unwise and would not look good on paper, so we leave that to your imagination. At Singapore, a larger launch pulled up to the Teia Maru. It apparently had legal business with the big ship, since its operations were unmolested. A young Malayan, possibly a returned student, was on the deck of the small boat surveying the Americans on the decks of the Teia. After waving a friendly gesture with his hand he stopped and began writing with chalk on the flat surface of the boat, the following words: (1) "Victory," (2) "Dictators must go." (3) "J's all finished." At this point a Japanese officer was observed approaching. He very deliberately erased what he had just written and continued to write in the same indifferent attitude "2 times 2 make 4," erased that also and walked away as though all unaware of the spectators looking down from the upper decks of the Teia.

On the morning of October 15 we awoke to find we had sailed into midsummer heat during the night and were anchored in the beautiful, quiet harbor of Mormugao, Portuguese India. Here we were to await the arrival of the Gripsholm and exchange boats and places with her fifteen hundred Japanese repatriates. Personally I shall always remember Mormugao harbor, not only because we met the Gripsholm there, but for its gorgeous sunsets and awe-inspiring storm clouds which disappeared without a single breath of storm.

It is also the burial place of Frances of Assisi, and the place was held sacred by all the Catholics on board. And so we came to Goa (Goa is simply another name for Mormugao harbor, really the name of a little town some distance from the harbor).

I am sure every woman passenger on the Teia felt greatly indebted to the men passengers who had to work like Turks, taking care of all our hand baggage until we reached the Gripsholm. It is interesting to know that the Japanese passengers had eight thousand pieces of hand luggage while we Americans had only three thousand, and still more interesting is the fact that the American male internees handled those three thousand pieces of baggage thirty-three times from Shanghai to the Gripsholm at Goa.

On the whole it was a wonderful voyage from every standpoint, and inconveniences were to be expected in a time like this. Someone said he never before saw so many missionaries reading their Bibles so much of the time. The missionaries perhaps get more credit than they deserve here, for the Bible was the only book we were allowed to bring and we had access to no others on the Teia. Perhaps the Japanese deserve more credit here than we are inclined to give them, even though we considered the lack of books an inconvenience. Even the weather seemed to be in our favor all the way. We crossed the equator twice on this lap of the voyage and were surprised at the coolness of the atmosphere in the tropics. Many were the prayers made in behalf of the captain of the Teia, the hand that steered our ship through such dangerous waters in such a perilous time. They were all answered and "so he brought us into our desired haven."

On to New York

BY MINOR M. MYERS

Goa was a new place for most of the repatriates returning from the Orient. Few of us even knew Portugal had territory in India. The exchange of repatriates there put it on the map and made it an important place in future history. In the early morning of October 15 when we were supposed to land we observed that our boat was sailing almost due east; then about eight o'clock we were able to see land, first the small islands and next the mainland. After looking at only water for a number of days we were thrilled to see land. As we approached the harbor several ships came into view. These proved to be German freighters which the crews had scuttled shortly after war was declared. The pilot met us a considerable distance out to take us in, for the channel was shallow. We observed that the rudder of our ship churned up muddy water.

Passengers crowded the deck, watching our ship, the Teia Maru, move slowly into her berth and at the same time exulting over the beauty of the landscape. Just a few hundred yards back of the dock was a lovely hill covered with semitropical grass, trees and shrubbery. Several red-roofed cottages with white painted walls were nestled among the palms along its side. On top was a beautiful old stone chapel which could be seen from far out over the countryside. On the crest where the hill turned, an old brick fort, built during the fifteenth century by the Arabs before the country was taken by the Portuguese, looked out over the harbor and villages across the river. In those early days it guarded the land as well as the sea for the Arabs were attacked from the land by the Indians, who did not want them in their territory. This old fort is now being used for a school and thus is serving to enlighten the many Indian pupils there.

Several groups of workmen began immediately to unload our baggage and the parcels which the Japanese had

sent to their internees in this country. The baggage was stored in big warehouses from the weather and made available to the owners if they needed it. It is really a tremendous job to load and unload a big ship, even though ours was not so heavily laden. It took six days and most of the nights, using four cranes and a couple hundred men, to handle the baggage and parcels at Goa. The American Red Cross had sent out on the Gripsholm thousands of parcels to be delivered to the prisoners of war and internees in Japan, the Philippines, Hongkong, and China. We rejoiced and thanked God when we saw the parcels being unloaded, for all of us were eager that those we left behind might have something from home to cheer and comfort them, and strengthen them physically too.

It was not until after lunch on the second day that we Teia Maru passengers saw a tiny speck out on the horizon which, growing larger as it came closer, proved to be the beautiful, majestic Gripsholm. To see her pull up to the dock gave us one of the greatest thrills of our voyage. Another great thrill was walking up the gangway to the Gripsholm when we were being exchanged from one ship to the other and realizing that we were free men again—no longer enemy nationals to those in charge of us. Words were inadequate to express the feelings experienced by many of the passengers. The following day three of us were leaning on the rail talking of that experience. One of them said, "I just can't describe how I felt. I felt as if the whole of the inside of me was all aglow." The other said, "I felt as if every cell in my body was smiling."

In the forenoon of October 19, 1,503 of us were exchanged for an equal number of Japanese. They left the farthest end of their ship and circled around to the farthest end of the other one, while we took the shortest route between the nearest ends of the ships. Both groups were moving at the same time and four hours were required to complete the exchange of the passengers, including those carried on stretchers.

While at this port a number of our passengers had opportunity to talk with some of the Japanese repatriates. They were friendly and a number of them said that

they did not want to return to Japan. Some of them stated that they had not seen their home country since they were very young. We felt sorry for them because they did not know what they were in for. We knew we were coming to better food and accommodations on the Gripsholm than we had had, while they were going to worse quarters and poorer food on the Teia Maru. We were happy and rejoicing over our lot, but many of them were not happy over theirs.

While they were still on the Gripsholm a large group of Japanese sang American songs for us to hear. And one evening while the boats were still in harbor a group of Christians went on the end of the deck nearest the Japanese and sang hymns for them. The next day at their request we again sang hymns for them. This was an expression of friendliness and Christian feeling for those Christians who because of the war between our two countries were enemy nationals.

We were promised a good buffet turkey dinner for our first meal on the Gripsholm. And we had it, with chicken and ham, too, to say nothing about peas, potato and fruit salad, pickles and cranberry sauce, tomato juice, milk and coffee and much more besides. How we did enjoy that first meal! Another thing that tasted good was the bar of Nestle's chocolate the Red Cross representative handed each passenger as we came aboard. Nothing could have been more appetizing than that.

At Goa several passengers saw one or more of their loved ones for the first time in many months. We rejoiced with them. One husband who was in the service came all the way across India to see his wife, who had been a nurse in a hospital in China. An eighty-year-old missionary was met by his son, who flew from Kunming, China, to see his father. Theirs was a touching meeting and it did us all good.

The day before we sailed from here we were saddened by the death of one of our passengers. Rev. Arthur of the Presbyterian mission died of apoplexy. One severe stroke was followed by lighter ones. Being ill at Shanghai he was carried aboard on a stretcher

after a long wait for the authorities to decide whether or not they should take one so ill, lest he die on their boat. He made considerable improvement on the voyage and his friends thought he would be able to get home to his family. Arrangements were made as quickly as possible for his interment so that our boat would not be delayed in departure. Permission was obtained from the port authorities for him to be buried in a Protestant cemetery across the river. The secretary of his mission, who conducted the committal service, and the pallbearers were the only ones permitted to accompany the body to the burial ground. The sad news was then cabled to his wife.

The last parcel was hoisted on to the Teia Maru on the morning of the twenty-first and soon the tug boats began pulling her away from the pier. Before getting out of the harbor she grounded in the mud. The tugs helped get her loose and soon she disappeared over the horizon. Our boat was ready the next day and we, too, were assisted in leaving. We looked back upon the beauty of the landscape, thinking of what that little place meant to us. We praised our heavenly Father for his goodness and protection thus far on our long voyage.

At Goa a number of passengers received cablegrams from their home folks and boards or firms they represented in the East, and messages were sent to relatives and friends. We were told that a lot of mail came out on the Gripsholm for us but that it would not be distributed until after we left harbor. Sure enough we were not out of sight of land when the authorities began distributing it. As we had been used to standing in line in camp for so many things we lined up for our letters. After receiving them we hurried off to some quiet place on deck, in the lounge or to our staterooms to read the messages of love and hearty welcome back to our homeland. It was a feast for most of the passengers far superior to the turkey dinner served us after coming aboard. It took us quite a while to finish reading; some of us were so oblivious to what was going on that we did not know we were moving. Soon we began sharing with our friends the good news received, and rejoicing with each other. For many this was the first news from loved ones

in nearly two years. Several had their joy mingled with sorrow when letters told of a son, a brother, a nephew, or a parent whom they would not see on arrival, and of some who had died. Our hearts went out in sympathy to those whose hearts were saddened.

The next day magazines which the Red Cross and other organizations had sent along were distributed: Life, Time, the Saturday Evening Post, Colliers, the Woman's Home Companion, and the Atlantic Monthly in fairly large numbers and various issues for all the passengers. Individuals received copies of the Christian Century, Harpers, and Newsweek, which were later shared with any who wanted to read them. These magazines were greatly appreciated. We read them with genuine eagerness, for we wanted to learn what was going on. We had been cut off from the news and outside world for so long. A time was arranged in the forenoon and in the afternoon of each day at which a passenger could take one magazine to keep two days at the most so that others could have a chance at it. The old one had to be returned to get a new one. Passengers helped with this satisfactory distribution arrangement. This reading, along with the books from the ship's library, kept the passengers supplied with plenty of reading material, all the way to New York. A few new air-mail copies of Time were purchased at Rio de Janeiro.

Because we were absorbed for days in our reading matter we were nearing Port Elizabeth before we were aware of it. On the evening of November 2, we saw the lights on shore, and anchored outside the harbor gate for the night. Before sunup next morning the pilot came aboard and immediately we were slowly winding our way in and up to the pier. As soon as we were docked, city and port officials came aboard with local currency, mail and telegrams. Even before breakfast we had long lines of passengers—one to receive local currency cash (the state department had arranged an advance of the equivalent of \$25.00 gold for each adult passenger to use here), one for mail, one for posting letters and another for shore passes. All were eager to go ashore as quickly as possible, yet it was noon before the last ones were supplied with permits and cash.

This port is small though much larger than Goa, and the city of 120,000 population is beautiful, clean and well-improved. It stretches for several miles along the shore and reaches up over the hill which overlooks the harbor. In this locality the color line is clearly marked, with little intermingling between the whites and the blacks. This part of Africa may be one of the hot spots of racial conflict in the future. The citizens of Port Elizabeth were very hospitable and heartily welcomed the repatriates. They directed us to a large hall (an ostrich feather market when ostrich feathers were in great demand) where they furnished us information and guides for shopping and sightseeing, and served refreshments and meals. The first meal was free whether served there or in any of the restaurants, and many of the residents invited passengers to their homes for the night. The mayor entertained at the city hall, the Rotary Club had a dinner for Rotarians, and special entertainment and a sightseeing trip were arranged for the children. Mothers were thus given a respite and the children had a delightfully grand time. We carried away with us many pleasant memories of those hospitable people.

It was here at Port Elizabeth that we three, Grace Clapper, Hazel Rothrock and I, were much pleased to receive a letter from Howard Sollenberger, then at Durban, 400 miles north, telling us why he was there and that his father and Ernest Wampler had already left India for America. Another interesting thing happened just as soon as we docked. A number of us were looking over the rail at those down on the pier. A loud voice called up, "Are there any Baptists on board?" I replied, "Plenty of them." He said, "Tell some of them to stick their heads out here." In a few moments several saw a friend and colleague, Rev. Struthers, formerly of occupied China, now on his way back to free China. He with several other Protestant missionaries returning to China, India and the Near East, and a number of Catholic missionaries to Africa had arrived from the States just the day before we arrived. Rev. Struthers hopes to help with relief in the territory where Brethren Wampler and Sollenberger administered relief.

Our next stop was at Rio de Janeiro, after another

ten days. It was foggy with clouds lying low. As we moved very slowly into the harbor we could see glimpses of the beautiful mountains rising up almost abruptly out of the water. And on the highest peak we saw briefly; as the clouds parted, the statue of Christ miles away. On clear days it can be seen a great distance, but that morning we had to be satisfied with brief glances snatched between the passing clouds. The harbor at Rio is one of the biggest in the world with one of the most beautiful cities along the edge. Back of the city mountains tower up towards the sky. The first thing we did after going ashore was to ride over the city in a taxi and go to the top of the peak, going up the steepest part by cogwheel trolley. We wanted to see at close range that impressive reinforced concrete statue of Christ standing over one hundred feet high. His hands are outstretched as if he were blessing the city and the bay into which ships of many nations come. Many letters were received here and we began to feel that we were getting nearer home.

We were not so crowded on the Gripsholm as on the Teia Maru, and the food was excellent and attractively served. There was plenty of deck space and lounge rooms, which were used for a while each Sunday for religious services. Before breakfast communion service was held in the largest lounge, and in the forenoon two Protestant services, as the room was not large enough to accommodate all at one meeting; at the same time the Catholics held Mass in another lounge. Sunday-school classes were held on deck and in the staterooms. Our hearts were full of praise and thanksgiving to God. Similar services had been held on the Teia Maru. In the evening a meeting for youth which was followed by hymn singing was held on aft deck. Bible classes were conducted by passengers on both boats to our mutual benefit. A number of classes and lectures on a variety of subjects were arranged for adults, the classes meeting usually three times a week and dealing with history of Thailand, China, and Europe, social psychology, and economics. School children continued their classwork as best they could, though greatly handicapped for lack of textbooks.

On this voyage of over 21,000 miles and of seventy-four days on board the ships, we saw only one other boat except as we neared the harbors of the ports of call; that one guided us through Sunda Straits between Java and Sumatra, where the waters presumably were mined. And we had no storm at sea. One experienced seaman said he would not have believed that it was possible for us not to have one storm on the seas we traversed for that length of time.

Another thrill for us was when we pulled into New York harbor the last night in November far enough to see the lights on Long Island. It was also thrilling the next morning when we went past the Statue of Liberty, that symbol of peace and liberty which greets and welcomes those who come in by sea. Some passengers on deck cheered; others shed tears of joy; all heartily rejoiced. Soon we were docked and busily completing the necessary details (some of which took a long time) preparatory to going ashore. Some of us did not get off until the next day. After passing customs the Red Cross handed us our mail and then it was that we learned that some friends and relatives were awaiting us at Prince George Hotel. For these experiences we thanked God. We offered a prayer that our country would always remain the land of freedom in which every person could have opportunity to develop the best that is in him, and that during this terrible war and afterwards the United States may never lose those high ideals which have been her strength and power through the years. We thanked God for our friends and relatives and for our government.

You Will Remember

That

- The “incident” happened in China on July 7, 1937, at Marco Polo Bridge near Peking. This “incident” marked the beginning of open hostility between China and Japan on Chinese soil.
- On February 19, 1938, the Wampler home at Tsin Chou was bombed; all escaped unharmed.
- On December 2, 1937, Alva Harsh, Mary Harsh, and Minneva Neher disappeared at Show Yang.
- In the early summer of 1940 thirteen Chinese Christians were put to death at Liao Chou station; five were women, eight were men.
- At Ping Ting Chinese Christians were put in prison and persecuted. In order to force the Americans out of China the Japanese aggressors punished the innocent Chinese people.
- The Church of the Brethren missionaries, in order to protect the lives of Chinese Christians, left China in December 1940.
- Eight missionaries who were attending language school in Peking, China, went to Baguio in the Philippine Islands in order to continue their study.
- Three missionaries remained in Peking. They were Minor M. Myers, V. Grace Clapper, and Hazel Rothrock. It was their hope to assist the students in Peking and help the orphaned church in the interior whenever possible.
- Fourteen missionaries with their children returned to the United States of America, in order to spare their Chinese brethren persecution and death.
- During 1941-1943 Ernest Wampler and O. C. Soltenberger were in unoccupied China carrying on relief work.
- From September to December 1943 Minor M. Myers, V. Grace Clapper and Hazel Rothrock were coming

home on the Gripsholm. They reached New York on December 2, 1943.

—Our China missionaries and the General Mission Board hope for the day when the missionaries may return to China to give of their service to that vast and needy land.



